

Camerata combines skill and energy

by Margaret Little

On Wednesday, January 23 at the Rebecca Cohn Auditorium, Camerata combined youthful enthusiasm and virtuoso musicianship to prove why it has become Canada's most innovative chamber ensemble.

Cello, clarinet, soprano and piano performed a wide variety



of music in duos, trios and quartets.

Beginning with classical compositions by Schubert and Beethoven, the Toronto based group displayed quiet sensitivity.

Soprano Mary Lou Fallis, accompanied by clarinetist James Campbell, sang two of Schubert's operas delightfully. Fallis' voice seemed strained in the first opera but blended beautifully with the mellow clarinet tones in Schubert's "Der Hirt auf dem Felsen". Campbell displayed a tremendous range and subtle phrasing. The melody jumped from clarinet to soprano while the piano created a background of continuous chords.

Beethoven's famous **Septet in Eb Major**, originally composed for a clarinet trio, was performed by clarinet, piano and cello. The second move-



ment, Adagio cantabile, ebbed and flowed with musical tonalities. The innovative "clarinet trio" proved the group's adaptability.

Pianist Kathryn Root moved with graceful ease over the complex ornaments. She had the sensitivity of a fine accompanist and also the control of a solo pianist. Her

medlies evoked a calmness from which the clarinet and cello performed.

Where the first part of the program displayed the group's virtuoso musicianship, the second half showed their inventive and humorous side.

Hovhanness' **Saturn** displayed carefully measured silences and an exploring of tones and distances. The effect was an inter-lunar experience. Piano and clarinet explored different ranges, while the soprano sang poetic prose such as "My hymn is around my note like rings around Saturn."

A series of Chansons d'amour and operas added humour to the program. Cellist Coenraad Bloemendal sympathized well with the piano creating an ephemeral mood in Faure's **Après un reve**.

The operas gave every musician a chance to shine.

Comic tension escalated as clarinet and soprano fought for the limelight in **Clarinet Fantasy**.

A jazz version of **When the Saints Come Marching In** ended the evening with a burst of energy. Throughout the program Camerata proved their love of a wide spectrum of music.



Colville shows painting's progress

by Eleanor Austin

"There is no original of a painting," said Alex Colville on Friday evening. Colville gave a talk on his 1967 work **Pacific**, as it relates to the current exhibition theme at the Nova Scotia Art Gallery, **Primo Pensiero—First Thoughts**.

A painting is just a series of mistakes, he said quoting a French artist. You eliminate the undesirable features and enhance the others.

Colville explained there are five drawings extended around the painting **Pacific** showing that a painting is a sequence of thoughts that progress.

The function of the drawing (or series) is to "latch onto a natural elusive idea," he explained. The artist is trying to produce an image without knowing what he is going to do, how to go about it or why the idea exists, he added.

An indistinct idea of what one is going to paint is often present, Colville said. You see a vague shadow of a form that is not yet present and the artist must take that shadow and make it into a substantial form.

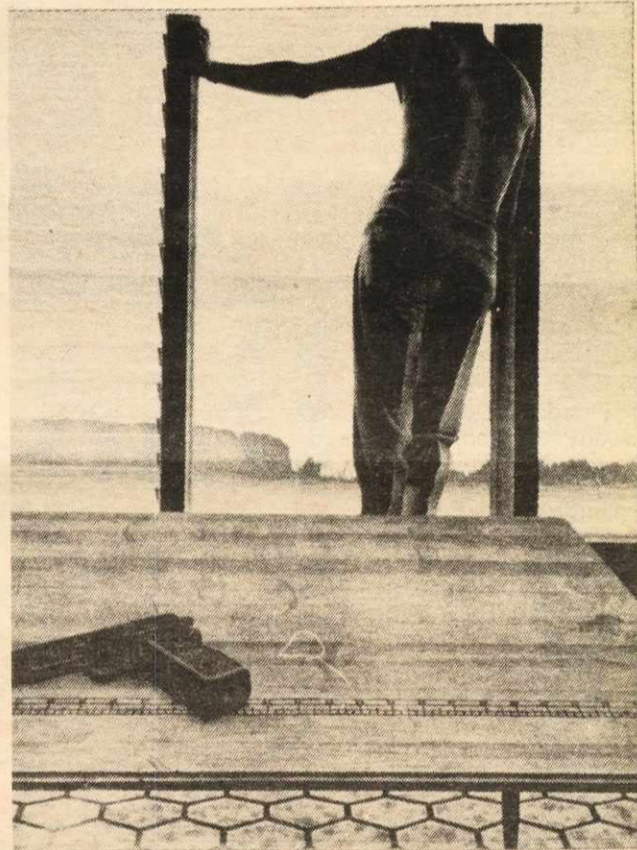
This is why painters use drawings first, he said. "The medium of drawing is used to tentatively approach preliminary solutions," he explained, "and it is more economical to make initial mistakes in drawings instead of with more expensive materials!"

The modern tendency to collect drawings of painters is a mistake, said Colville. He compared it to architectural drawings. People look at the buildings to see if they like it, he said, not the drawings. Colville added that drawings of painters have come to the public's attention as a result of "market forces".

Colville's paintings are among those in the 'Poetic Realism' tradition. He defined realism in Western Europe and North America as a "hankering after general images".

Initially, a painting belonging to the realism tradition is an ordinary scene, like a girl pouring milk from a pitcher, he said. It is this mutuality that provides their entry into the painting, that make them so interesting, he added.

Colville was born in Toronto, Ontario but spent most of his youth in Amherst, N.S. He studied Fine Arts at Mount Allison University and then joined the Canadian Army (the last two years as a war artist) before returning to Mount Allison to teach. Colville is presently painting full time in Wolfville, N.S.



Alex Colville's Pacific

Colville again

by John Vilks

Tucked away in a rather unobtrusive corner of the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia is a collection of drawings titled **Primo Pensiero: First Thoughts**. This exhibition, in the make-shift gallery of the second floor, is a worthwhile show to see and contemplate.

The drawings, which date from the late 15th century to the present, were not meant to be considered as finished works of art but are a demonstration of the thought processes of the artist. The images were taken from the sketch books of various artists and embody the many stages of design conception which go into a finished painting.

Therefore, the spontaneous trial and error quality of art making is revealed. This can be seen in the errors and corrections of works such as Baldassare Franceschini's **Sheet of Studies with an Angel** which shows various

parts of human anatomy and an angel with a double face.

The preliminary nature of these works serves to remove some of the mystery of the finished work of art. It challenges the myth of the innate talent of the artist by placing the viewer in closer contact with the act of creation. This can be seen in Alex Colville's **Five Sketches for "Pacific"**. The majority of art is the result of long and hard work which can be mastered by anyone who has the initiative and time to devote to it.

The placement of the sketches within frames is a direct contradiction to the intentions of the exhibition. The presentation of the works in such a manner place them in the rare context as completed works of art and suggests that they should be viewed as such. Despite this flaw, the idea behind the exhibition is a good one and the works themselves are worth seeing.

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